



Occupational Health Unit

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Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program

410 Capitol Ave., PO Box 340308, MS#:11EOH Hartford, CT 06134-0308

(860) 509-7742

(860) 509-7785

www.ct.gov/dph/occupationalhealth

Staff Members

Albert DeLoreto

Deborah Pease

Thomas St. Louis

Brian Testut

KEEPING CONNECTICUT'S WORKERS HEALTHY

FATAL INJURIES IN CONSTRUCTION

Fatal falls in construction are preventable when required safe guards are in place, such as guardrails and personal fall arrest systems, yet construction workers continue to work unprotected.

In the United States:

- Falls in construction account for more than one-third of all fatal occupational injuries.
- Construction workers have a fatal occupational injury rate nearly three-times higher than that of all other workers (9.7 vs. 3.3 per 100,000).
- 48% of all fall fatalities in private industry are construction workers
- Three of the ten occupations with the highest fatal injury rates are construction occupations, with roofers having a rate of 34.7 per 100,000 full-time equivalent workers (www.bls.gov).



In Connecticut:

- In 2009, 27% of all workplace fatal injuries occurred in construction workers.
- The total reportable workplace illness/injury rate for construction workers is 5.3 per 100 full-time workers vs. 4.2 per 100 full-time workers for other private industry workers (www.dol.gov).

CONNECTICUT CASE STUDIES

In October 2011, a 36 year old male construction laborer sustained fatal injuries after falling off of the roof of a commercial building in Stamford. At the time of the incident, he was installing metal roofing panels. He lost his balance and died after falling 35 feet to the ground below. The worker was not wearing a personal fall arrest system and no guardrail system was in place at the time.

In February 2012, a 46 year old male construction worker died while repairing a pitched roof at a condominium complex in Shelton. The worker lost his footing and sustained fatal injuries after falling 39 feet from the roof to the ground below. The worker was not wearing a personal fall arrest system and no other fall protection systems were in place.

Construction workers exposed to an unprotected side or edge when working at heights of 6 feet or more above a lower level must be protected from falling by the use of guardrail systems, safety nets, or personal fall arrest systems (OSHA Standard 1926.501).

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.osha.gov/dts/vtools/construction.html>

http://webapps.dol.gov/search/AdvSearch.aspx?search_term=construction&x=32&y=8

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/construction/>